SCENIC

The Acid Gospel Experience





EMIGRE No.63/ECD023

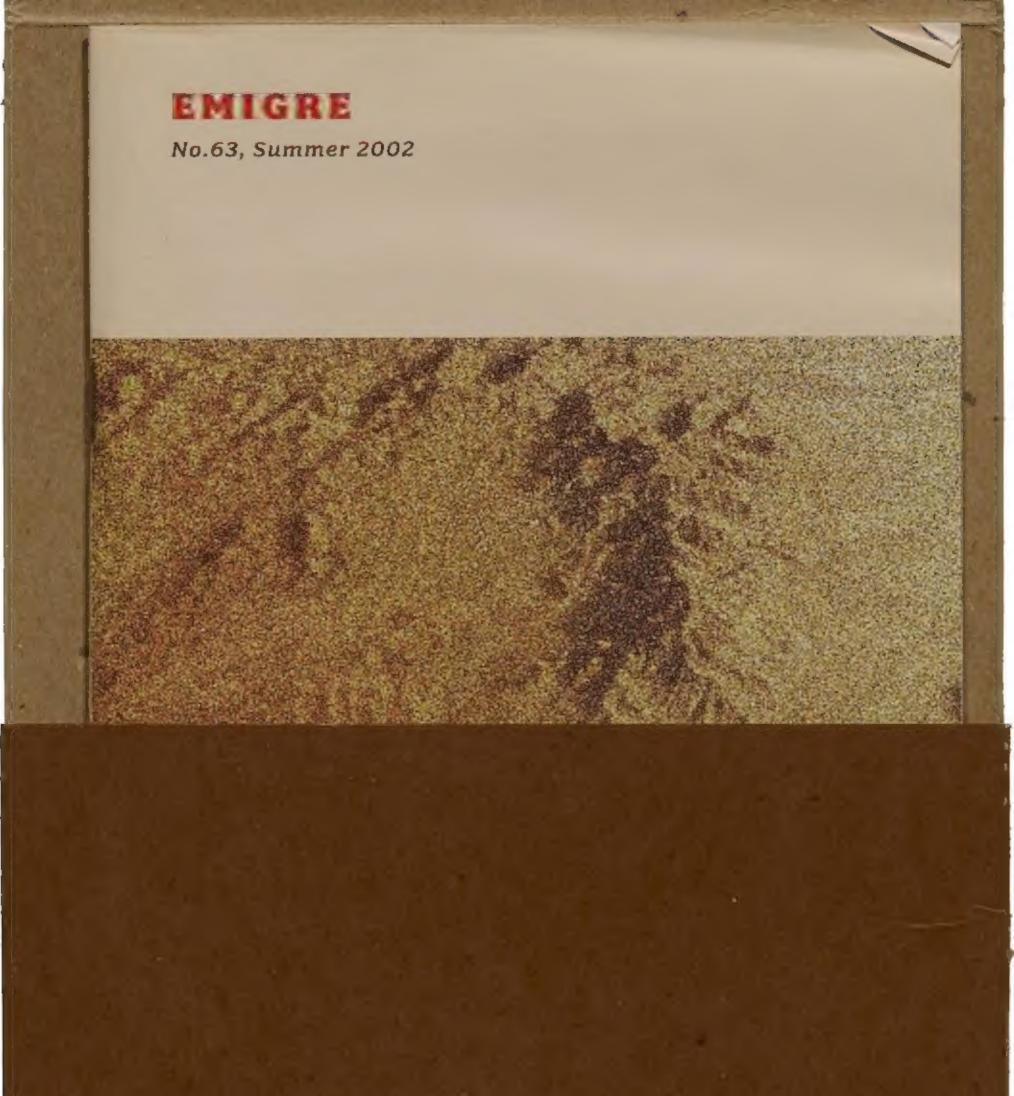
Scenic: BRUCE LICHER: Guitars, effects, moog, percussion, ebow, metal horn, synth, tambourine. JAMES BRENNER: Bass, effects, chamberlin, percussion. BROCK WIRTZ: Drumkit, congas, percussion, tambourines. ROBERT LOVELESS: Keyboards, chamberlin, effects, harmonica, vibes, percussion. MARK MASTOPIETRO: Guitars, effects, ebow, sitar, vibes, glockenspiel, lap steel, conga.

Special guest: HAROLD BUDD: Piano on "Under a Wing." courtesy Atlantic Records.



RECORDED JULY 1999 - FEBRUARY 2000 AT SONORA RECORDERS, ATWATER, CALIFORNIA (ENGINEERED BY JEFF PETERS, ASSISTED BY JAMES BRENNER), AND SPRING TECHNICAL LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA (ENGINEERED BY BILL SANKE). MIXED AUGUST 2000 AT SPRING TECHNICAL BY SANKE AND SCENIC, MASTERED MAY 2002 AT SAE MASTERING, PHOENIX, ARIZONA BY MATT MURMAN, ALL MUSIC WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY SCENIC, PUBLISHED BY THE INDEPENDENT PROJECT MUSIC (BMI). ISSUED UNDER LICENSE FROM INDEPENDENT PROJECT RECORDS, SEDONA, AZ. C 2002 EMIGRE. D 2002 INDEPENDENT PROJECT RECORDS, WARM SCENIC THANKS TO: RICHARD BARBON, HAROLD BUDD, JAY DUNN, RANDALL KELLEY, ESO., MAX LICHER, FREDRIK NILSEN, JEFF PETERS, BILL SANKE.





EMIGRE

No.63, Summer 2002

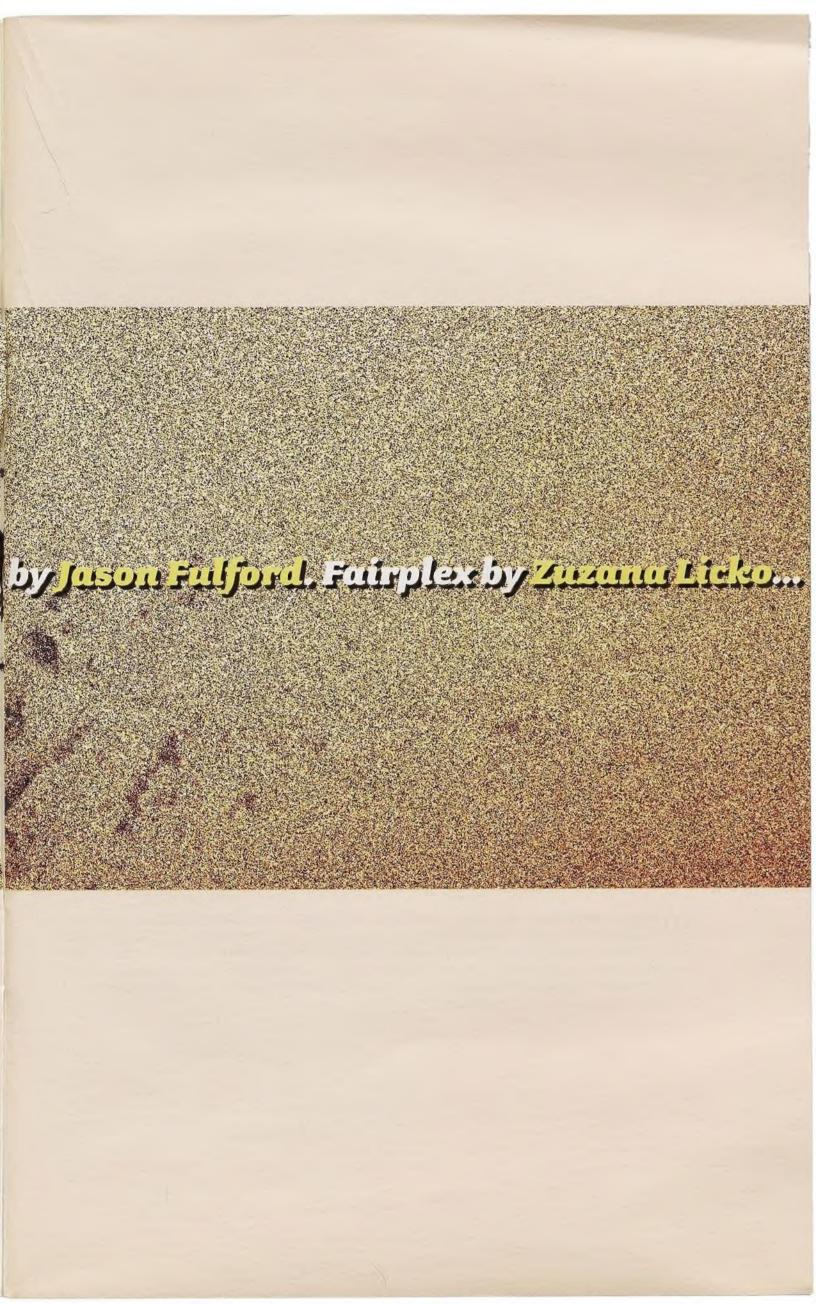


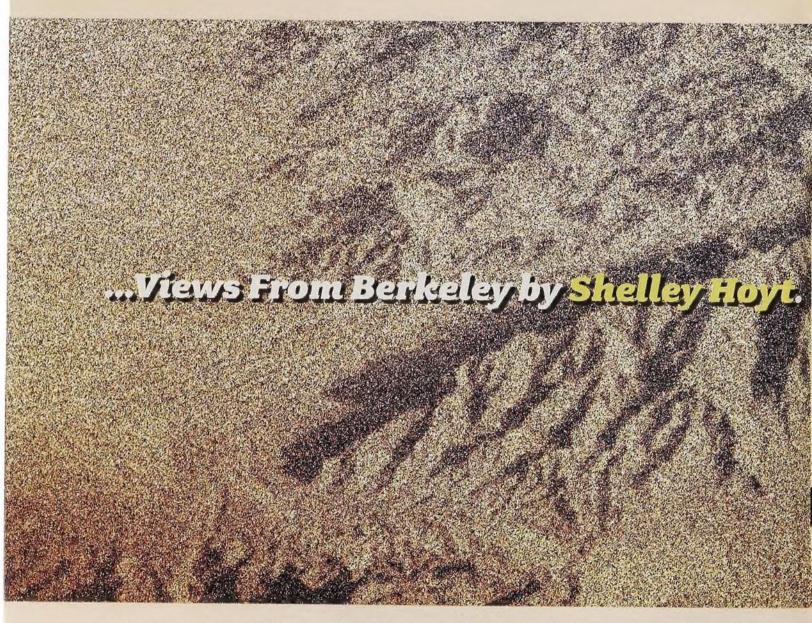




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Scenic Automatic by Charles Wilkin. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS BY Bruce Licher

Introduction

What goes around comes around, they say. In 1990 I had the pleasure of interviewing Bruce Licher of Independent Project Records & Press for *Emigre* #16. I forget how it all came about, but I was mystified by his work and wanted to find out how he operated. Not only did I enjoy his single-minded and unique design vision; but Bruce was able to combine the two things that he and I love the most: graphic design and music. On top of that, he also printed and produced his own album sleeves — on a letterpress no less!

For the past 20 years, Licher has been able to follow his dreams. I'm sure it hasn't been an easy road. It's difficult enough to carve out an existence as a free lance designer or a commercial letterpress printer. But to do both, and then also leave your mark on the music world without selling out or giving up artistic control, is impressive.

Licher's first band, Savage Republic, was an influential L.A. industrial noise band in the early 80s. The band meshed Middle Eastern melodies and mesmerizing tribal rhythms with industrial strength guitars and shouted lyrics. The design and printing of the album covers and related promotional materials were all produced by Licher, providing the band with a unique and consistent visual image.

In true D.I.Y. fashion, Licher learned on the job and developed a personal style that has since landed him countless commercial jobs creating limited edition packaging for both major and minor record labels. Justifiably, his work has appeared in graphic design books and exhibitions around the world, and he was nominated twice for a Grammy for best album packaging.

After Savage Republic, and just before swapping gritty downtown L.A. for idyllic Sedona, Arizona in 1992, Licher formed Scenic, a band with a similarly unique vision but decidedly more melodic and nuanced. The change of surroundings, intentional or not, was echoed in Scenic's more ambient, atmospheric sound, often described as a soundtrack to the American desert.

Besides the shift in musical direction, Scenic also allowed Licher to apply his new-found interest in desert landscape photography. The resulting integration of music, imagery and packaging is so complete, it is difficult to discern which came first, or whether the photography is there to support the music or *vice versa* (See *Emigre* #55). Two Scenic CDs and three CDeps have been released, garnering much critical acclaim for both their musical and visual qualities.

Releasing the new Scenic CD through *Emigre* brings us full circle. That first interview with Bruce, nearly 12 years ago, planted a seed in my mind. It inspired me to start Emigre Music. To collaborate with him on the premiere release of *The Acid*

Gospel Experience as the fourth and concluding release in this series of audible Emigre issues is a unique opportunity.

Later this month, this CD will be made available commercially by Hidden Agenda Records and distributed by Parasol in the U.S. Shortly after that it will be distributed in the U.K. by Tenor Vossa Records. That release will differ slightly from the *Emigre* release, featuring an alternate recording of "Lunar Afternoon," plus an 18 minute track titled "A Journey Through the Outer Reaches of Inner Space," which replaces "Monsoon." If you enjoy Scenic's music, I hope you will make an effort to purchase the original commercial release. It will be a great vote of confidence for Bruce's work. And you will be treated to his version of the packaging, which I'm sure will not disappoint. While you're at the store, see if they carry other Scenic releases. I recommend them all. Or place your order with Bruce Licher directly (see contact info below). Most likely, he will pack up your order himself, and throw in some hand-printed goodies. And where do you find that kind of personal involvement and devotion in commerce today?

In this issue of *Emigre* magazine, as in the previous issues that accompanied this series of CD/DVD releases, we let the music determine the content. We invited three artists to select or create work underscoring the theme of landscape evoked by Scenic's music. Designer/illustrator Charles Wilkin, photographer Jason Fulford and painter Shelley Hoyt provide the images.

Also, Zuzana Licko presents her first new typeface design in nearly two years. Fairplex, a sixteen font family, has been a long time in the making. It was inspired by features found in models ranging from the San Francisco Giants logo to Garamond. With tapered serifs that become more distinct and decorative as size and weight increases, and an overall low contrast of stroke and stem, Fairplex is designed to function as both an animated headline font and practical text face. We're subjecting it to its first road test in this issue of *Emigre*.

Finally, this is our last issue in the series that includes CD/DVD releases. Our next issue will focus on design writing once again, taking stock of the state of graphic design *circa* 2002. We'll hear from many familiar *Emigre* contributors, presented in an appropriate new format. Plus, we are reinstating the always popular "Readers Respond" section. Your comments to our publications never stopped coming, but due to limited space in the past four issues, we've had to save them up. As always, we're curious to know what you think. Send your comments to: editor@emigre.com or mail a letter to Emigre, 4475 D Street, Sacramento, CA 95819, USA. RVDL





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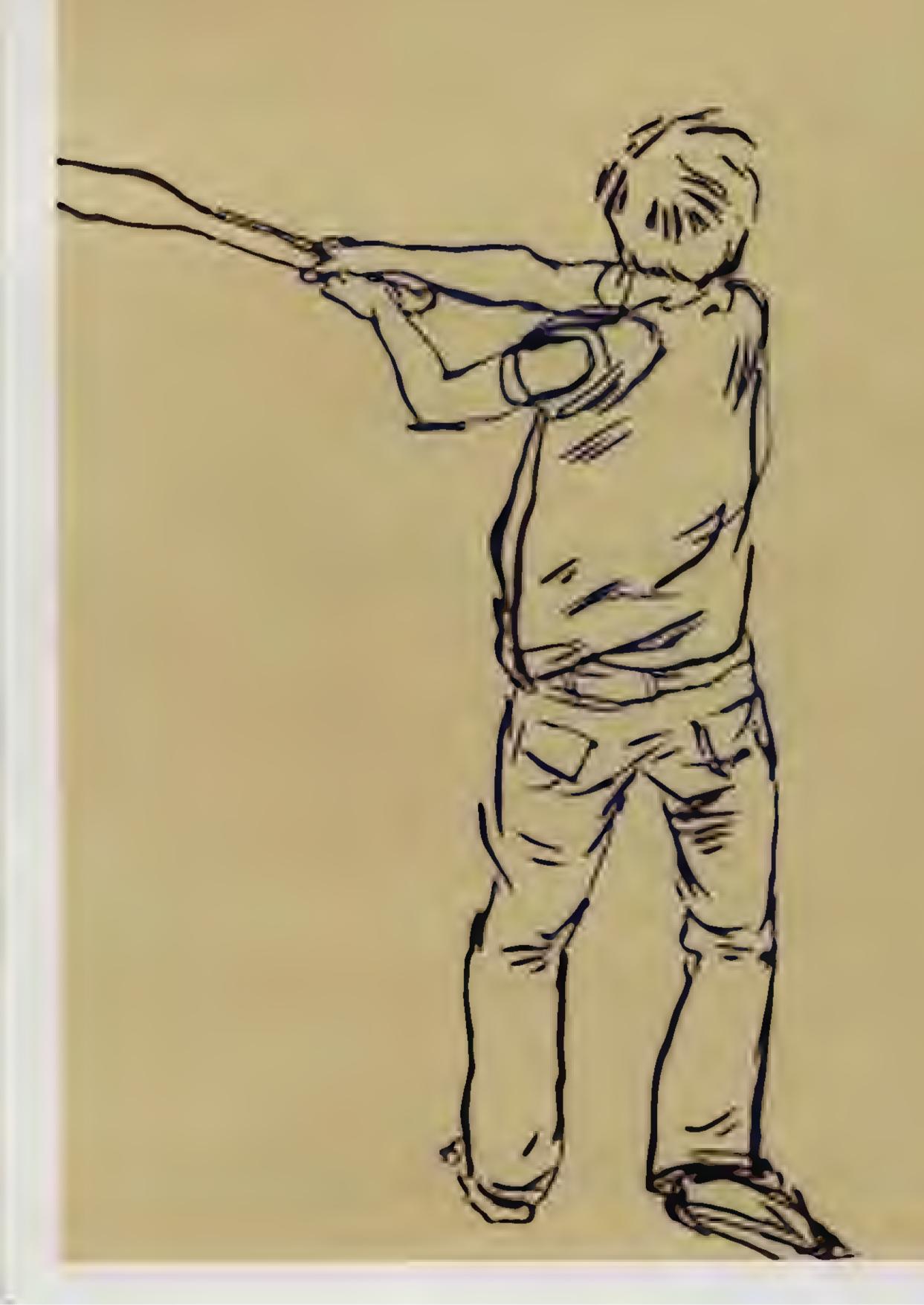
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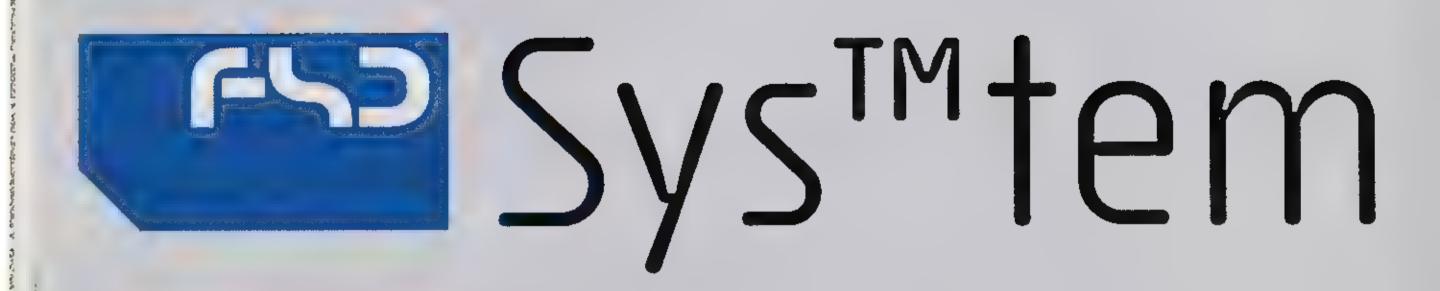


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W. Med. Italic

WIDE MEDIUM ITALIC

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Wide Black

FAIRPLEX
WIDE BLACK

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W. Blk. Italic

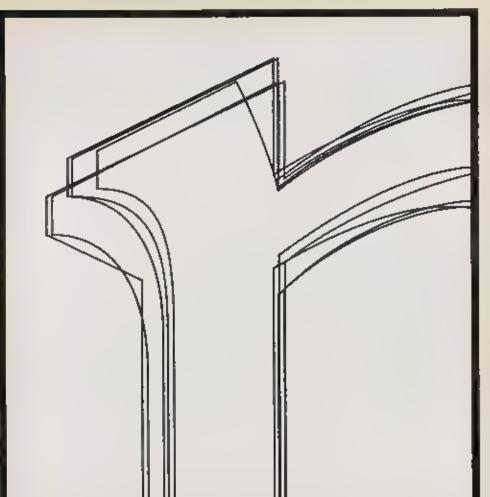
WIDE BLACK ITALIC

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DESIGNINGFAIRPLEX

The foundation for Fairplex began in January 1998. I wanted to develop a serif text face loosely based upon Garamond No.3. This resulted in many false starts, some of which turned into seemingly unrelated sans-serif designs, including Tarzana and



Solex.

As the experimentation continued, it became apparent that Fairplex would not be the Garamond revival that I had originally intended; perhaps I'll return to that sometime in the future.

My goal for Fairplex became that of creating a text face that would achieve legibility by avoiding contrast, especially in the Book weight. This was spurred

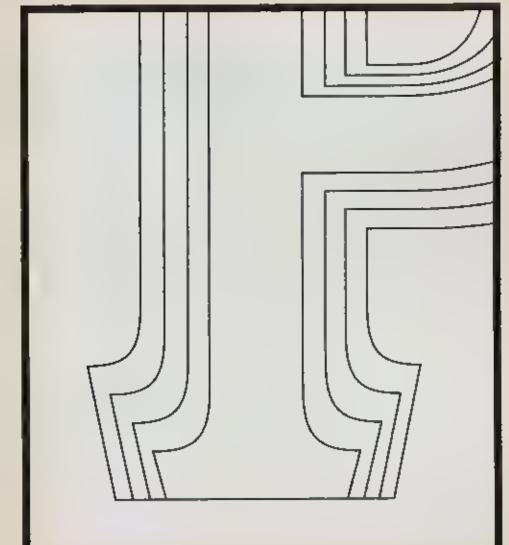
by experiences with my own eyesight, which I've noticed is becoming increasingly intolerant of high contrast typefaces when reading lengthy texts. (Especially when combined with paperback printing and less than perfect reading conditions!) As a result of its low contrast, the Fairplex Book weight is somewhat reminiscent of a sans serif, yet the slight serifs preserve the recognition of serif letterforms.

When creating the accompanying weights, the challenge was balancing the contrast and stem weight with the serifs. To provide a comprehensive family, I wanted the boldest weight to be quite heavy. This meant that the **Black** weight would need more contrast than the Book weight in order to avoid clogging up. But harmonizing the serifs proved difficult. The initial serif treatments I tried didn't stand up to the robust character of the **Black** weight. Several months passed without much progress,

and then one evening I attended a talk by Alastair Johnston on his book *Alphabets to Order*, a survey of nineteenth century type specimens. Alastair pointed out that slab serifs (also known as "Egyptians") are really more of a variation on sans serifs than on serif designs. In other words, slab serif type is more akin to sans-serif type with serifs added on than it is to a version of serif type. This sparked the idea that the solution to my

serif problem for Fairplex **Black** might be a slab serif treatment. After all, the Book weight already shared features of sans-serif types.

Shortly after this came the idea to angle the serifs. This was suggested by my husband, and was probably conjured up from his years of subconscious assimilation of the San Francisco Giants logo while watching baseball, and then



reinforced by a similar serif treatment in John Downer's recent Council Design. The angled serifs added visual interest to the otherwise austere slab serifs.

nnnnnn min min man man man medium Bold Black

The intermediate weights were then derived by interpolating the Book and **Black**, with the exception of several characters, such as the "n," which required specially designed features to avoid collisions of serifs, and to yield a pleasing weight balance. A range of weights was interpolated before deciding on the **Medium** and **Bold** weights.* – *Zuzana Licko*

Special thank you to John Downer and Linnea Lundquist for help and advice.

^{*}Custom weights and widths of Fairplex are available upon request.

WIDE

WIDE MEDIUM ITALIC

DETROIT EGYPTIAN

and other typographic curiosities

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CLASSIFYINGFAIRPLEX

The essence of a letterform is dictated by an inner framework—its "armature," as the late type designer Warren Chappell called it. A letterform with serifs has a personality greatly influenced by how its serifs are constructed. Serifs reveal a certain kind of attitude and orientation. In the history of type, Zuzana Licko's new series, Fairplex, finds a place among few antecedents. The serifs come from primarily nontypographic sources, but the skeletal forms are clearly recognizable as being typographic in tradition. Fairplex is a rare combination of elements from three distinct media:

- chromolithography of the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- American sign painting during approximately the same period
- display typefaces designed between ca. 1840 and ca. 1980





Figure 1.

Figure 2.

The Fairplex serif style was more common in commercial lithography and American sign painting (Fig. 1) than it was in type, but it had no single, established, standard form. Lettering artists introduced their own interpretations. In sign painting, this serif mode, with its pronounced bracketing and angled terminals, was known as the "Detroit" style during the early 1900s. In the lithography trade, there may have been another name, but it seems to have had no given name in the realm of type, in which names of

OLD WATER CANYON Indigenous shrubs of Santa Monica PLANOGRAPHIC RINING sliding alluminum doors BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Light Sweet Crude FANDANGO

YUMMY YUCCA CALCULATOR

letter styles and serif kinds were generally known by their routine inclusion in the full names of the faces. In the sign trade of a century ago, Fairplex would likely have been classified as a "Detroit Egyptian" lettering style: "Detroit" referring to the kind of serif, and "Egyptian" referring to its basically monoline structure or "armature" (Fig. 2).

Neither "Detroit" nor "Egyptian" are widely used terms in today's classifications of types. Alas, in the one area of printing where Fairplex has definite ancestors, namely planographic printing employed to manufacture product labels, there seems to be no compendium of all the lettering styles available. Maybe they weren't all documented.

The one place where the fashion remains in modern use is on granite grave markers, which are inscribed not by hand any more, but instead by masking and sandblasting (Fig. 3).



Figure 3.

In any case, even though Fairplex is indeed a new typeface design, it sits squarely in a camp of commercial lettering first seen in common use more than a century ago. It is therefore a very likely candidate for the same kinds of color effects that helped this grand style rise to prominence initially: inlines, outlines, centerlines and shadows. — John Downer

IMAGE SOURCES

Figure 1: Snow King Baking Powder cardboard sign from Country Store Antiques by Don and Carol Raycraft. Photocopy detail from a photo by Carol Raycraft

Figure 2: Atkinson's Sign Painting up to Now, 1909, by Frank H. Atkinson. Published by Frederick J. Drake & Company, Chicago.

Figure 3: Gravemarker at St. Joseph Cemetery, Iowa City. Photo by John Downer.

If one is inclined to wonder at first how so many dwellers came to be in the loneliest land that ever came out of GOD's hands, what they do there and why stay, one does not wonder so much after having lived there. None other than this long brown land lays such a hold on the affections. The rainbow hills, the tender bluish mists, the *luminous radiance of the spring*, have the lotus charm. They trick the sense of time, so that once inhabiting there you always mean to go away without quite realizing that you have not done it.

FAIRPLEX WIDE BOOK, BOLD & ITALICS 10/13 POINT

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FAIRPLEX NARROW MEDIUM, BLACK & ITALICS 10/13 POINT

Men who have lived there, miners and cattle-men, will tell you this, not so fluently, but emphatically, cursing the land and going back to it. For one thing there is the divinest, cleanest air to be breathed anywhere in GODs world. Some day the world will understand that, and the little oases on the windy tops of hills will harbor for healing its ailing, house-weary broods. There is promise there of great wealth in ores and earths, which is no wealth by reason of being so far removed from water and workable conditions, but men are bewitched by it and tempted to try the impossible.

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SHELLEY HOWAT

Views From Berkeley

Shelley Hoyt Views from Berkeley

When I began painting again in 1989, I never imagined my subject would become the landscape, and that that process would involve painting outdoors. It never occurred to me to paint outdoors, although I recall sharing studio space with a group of painters who used to talk about "going out drawing." To me that was a peculiar conjunction of words. You might ask a person if they wanted to go out dancing, but drawing? Later I had a conversation with a woman who said she supported herself making landscape drawings. In this way she was able to spend her days out of doors, driving around looking for places she would like to draw. It sounded to me like a very reasonable and sane way to make a living, but I hadn't the slightest idea what the equivalent might be in my own life. All of my artwork was dependent on indoor processes and I had never been interested in representing reality. For the most part, my work had been minimal and abstract. To find myself painting outdoors was a complete surprise. I was, first of all, delighted to be outdoors. That I had work to do that required me to be outdoors on a beautiful day seemed the perfect excuse I had needed my entire life, and the perfect antidote to so many years spent indoors working in isolation.

There is a camaraderie among artists who go out painting together, sharing the day and lunch. And there is social interaction with others that ranges from the disruptive and annoying to the delightful. I value most highly perhaps the opinion of children, and they will often tell me they are going to be artists when they grow up. Since being able to watch an artist work is not a common experience in this culture, I feel a particular responsibility painting in public. Because I have difficulty talking and painting at the same time, I often feel conflicted by this situation and try to paint away from a steady stream of foot traffic. If you discuss this issue with outdoor painters, all have different ways of dealing with it. I remember reading in National Geographic about Jamie Wyeth's cardboard house constructed to give him privacy when painting. My favorite story, which I hope to recall in time of need, is to just start swearing madly under your breath, and people will think you are having a very bad painting day and leave you alone.

When I started painting again, I bought the most essential colors on the list given to me by my painting teacher. Later, I bought colors I liked or thought might be useful. Out of the initial selection of perhaps 20 colors, I now actually paint with a very limited palette of six or seven colors: cerulean, French vermilion, burnt umber, indigo, terre verte, chrome green, and raw sienna. I paint entirely with filbert brushes made of badger hair. I paint on wood panels, and to prepare them, I alternately sand and apply three to five coats of gesso. Then I brush on a vermilion turpentine wash. This underpainting will unify the overall color of the painting and warm the blues.

Before I begin painting, I always have in mind the image I am going to paint, and what I choose is determined by what I am most attracted to on a given day. I include in the picture only as much or as little as I need to visually convey what I most love. As the light shifts and changes, I try to keep in mind, or recall, what attracted me to making the picture in the first place, In this way I am able to avoid being distracted by the changes.

Once I have chosen what I am going to paint, I usually make a rough sketch on the panel with vine charcoal. Sometimes I simply begin painting sky and water, and draw the land masses and trees directly into the paint with the blunt end of a brush. I am fascinated by the subtle nuances in color of sky and water, and always try to paint the color I see as accurately as possible. Some days I am able to mix colors quite easily, and on other days it feels difficult to even come close to what I see, as my own color perception shifts and changes.

As I paint pictures of the Bay over and over, I follow the changes in light and color with the seasons. What may appear to be a particular shape and color most of the year will suddenly shift and reveal another shape and color in a new season. What appeared dark will suddenly appear light. The entire shape of a tree can change. New shapes are suddenly revealed in "an entirely new light." Familiarity is suddenly rendered unfamiliar. I am continuously amazed observing this all carefully from day to day, season to season, year to year.



View from Euclid Avenue #12, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2001



View from Indian Rock #59, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2001



View from Ruse Garden #3, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2001



View from Indian Rock #58, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2001



View from Lawrence Hall of Science #20, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2002



View from Lawrence Hall of Science #15, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2001



View from Euclid Avenue #10, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2001



View from Lawrence Hall of Science #19, OIL ON WOOD PANEL, 20"x 20", 2002



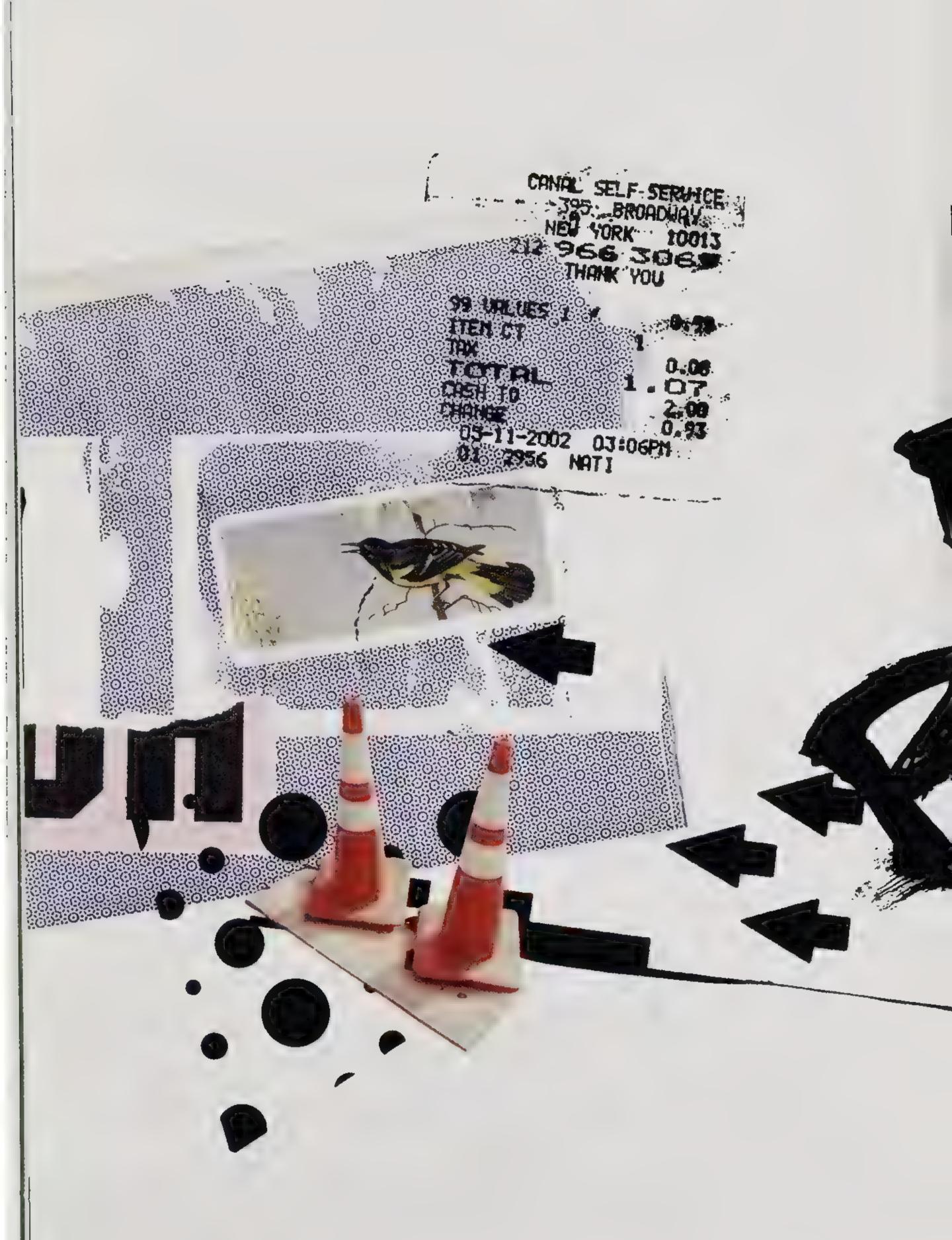
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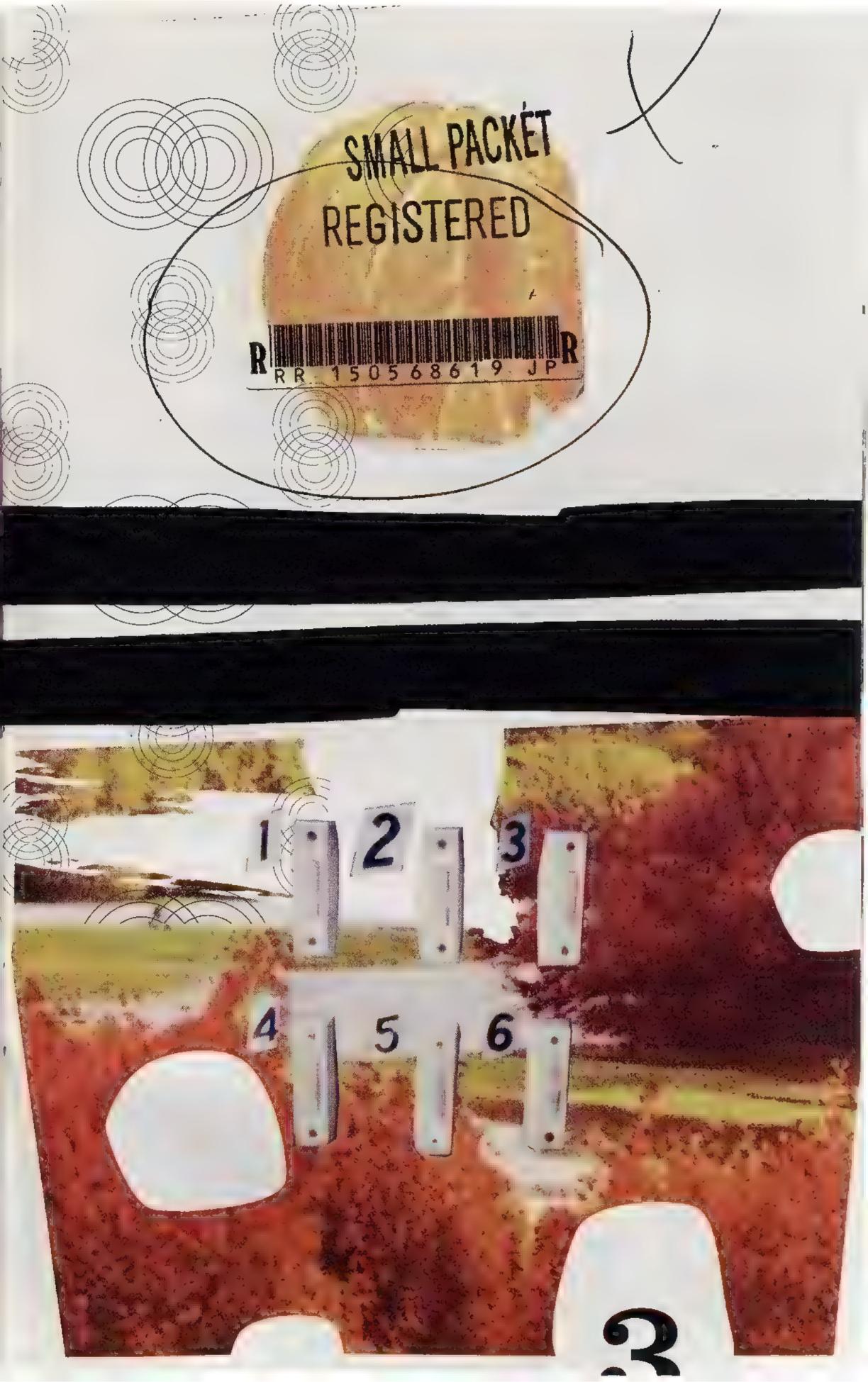
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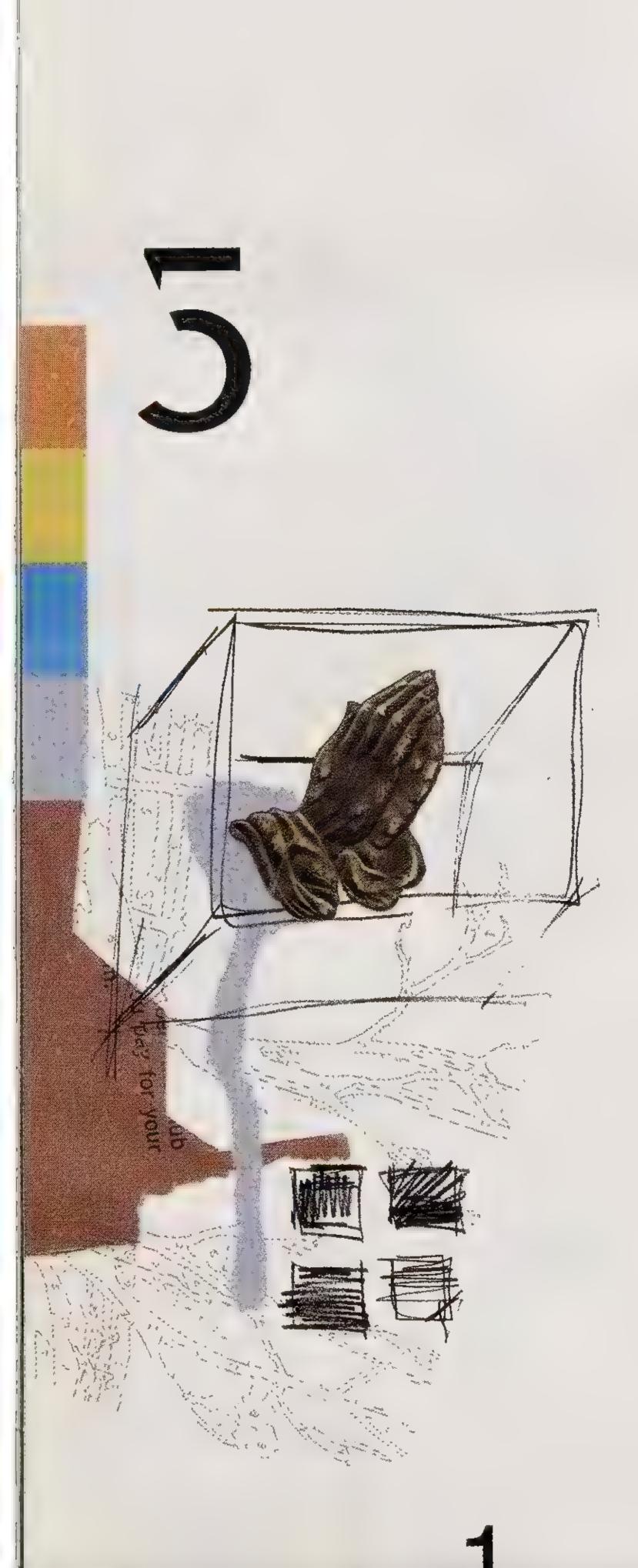
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David Carson Collection 1

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